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Our Vision

A fair and just Utah

Our Mission

To secure equal rights and
protections for LGBTQ Utahns
and their families



March 6, 2019

Dear Governor Herbert, Lt. Governor Cox, Rep. Eliason,

I am writing to resign my seat on the Governor's Youth Suicide Task Force, effective immediately. Last year, I considered it a distinct honor to be asked to serve. My hope was that your administration was serious about addressing issues related to LGBTQ youth suicide. I've come to realize that you are not.

When I first brought an anti-bullying proposal to the Task Force, I was shocked to learn that it wouldn't even be considered. Further, a spurious story was concocted to cover the fact you were unwilling to even debate an anodyne LGBTQ inclusive bullying statute. But still, I held out hope.

At our February press conference, Governor Herbert, you made a promise that Phase Two of the Task Force would focus on Veterans, LGBTQ and Native youth. I was looking forward to working with you toward that worthy goal. As the months went on, I asked repeatedly when the Task Force would reconvene. Every time, you evaded the question.

We continued our work.

In January, I brought Dr. Caitlin Ryan to meet with Lt. Governor Cox to discuss the connection between suicide and conversion therapy. In good faith, we introduced our legislative proposal to your office first. We met and co-drafted language with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We brought the top mental health professionals on board.

But yesterday, Governor, you turned your back on LGBTQ youth and the medical and mental health establishment. By endorsing Rep. Lisonbee's hostile substitute, you effectively cast your lot with a band of discredited and dangerous conversion therapists, who are still practicing techniques that harm youth — some lethally. Further, the legislation you endorsed excluded transgender children and will allow conversion therapists to continue their practice with impunity. And all that after grandstanding to the public with a seemingly supportive but ultimately empty soundbite to make your position look reasonable.

It is clear you have no interest in keeping your promise, nor are you interested in the plight of LGBTQ youth. I will not be window dressing to provide the Task Force cover. If you change your mind and wish to seriously engage the LGBTQ community, you know where to find me.

With All Due Respect,

Troy Williams

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